

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18999

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TAGS: PINT, SCUL, UR

SUBJECT: PRAISE FOR JEWS AND MUSIC IN THE SOVIET PRESS

1. BEGIN UNCLAS. THE MOSCOW EVENING NEWSPAPER VECHERNYAYA MOSKVA FOR

DEC 1 HAS AN ARTICLE OSTENSIBLE DEVOTED TO DESCRIBING A YOUNG CONDUCTORS' COMPETITION, BUT APPARENTLY INTENDED MAINLY TO OFFER PRAISE FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOVIET JEWS TO MUSICAL LIFE IN THE USSR. THE ARTICLE IS BY LEO GINSBURG, A PROFESSOR AT THE MOSCOW CONSERVATORY AND MEMBER OF THE JURY OF THE COMPETITION. GINZBURG DESCRIBES THE COMPETITION AND GOES ON TO STRESS ITS MULTINATIONAL CHARACTER. HE SINGLES OUT THE JEWS AND OBSERVES THAT A GREAT MANY JEWS HAVE WON PRIZES IN THE COMPETITION. JEWISH CONDUCTORS, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF THE OLDER GENERATION, DID A GREAT DEAL TO DEVELOP THE MULTINATIONAL CHARACTER OF SOVIET MUSIC. HE NOTES THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL JEWISH MUSIC AND THE ECHO IT HAS FOUND IN THE WORKS OF BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH COMPOSERS. WORKS OF SHOSTAKOVICH AND PROKOFIEV ARE CITED, AS ARE THE NAMES OF SEVERAL JEWISH COMPOSERS. CONCERTIZING ABROAD BY JEWISH MUSICIANS IS IMPORTANT, BOTH BECAUSE JEWS ARE A PART OF SOVIET MUSIC, AND ALSO BECAUSE IT GIVEN THE LIE TO COMPLAINTS FROM ABROAD (PRESUMABLY ABOUT THE POSITION OF JEWS IN THE USSR).

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JEWISH MUSICAL FOLKLORE, LIKE THAT OF OTHER SOVIET

NATIONALITIES, PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN SOVIET MUSICAL CULTURE. THEN, IN DISCUSSING THE ORIGINS OF THE FINALISTS FOR THE YEAR'S COMPETITION, GINZBURG NOTES THAT THEY INCLUDE, AMONG OTHERS, JEWS. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT. THE ARTICLE SHOWS THE EXTREME SENSITIVITY OF THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO THE JEWISH QUESTION, AND THE APPARENT NECESSITY TO DESCRIBE JEWISH SUCCESSES IN SOVIET LIFE. MUSIC IS ONE OBVIOUS SPHERE IN WHICH JEWS HAVE DONE ESPECIALLY WELL. IT IS A MARKED CONTRAST TO THE ANTI-SEMITIC PROPAGANDA THAT IS MORE OFTEN FOUND IN THE PRESS. IT IS PERHAPS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE WORD "YEVEERY," JEW, IS USED IN THIS ARTICLE, WHEREAS THOSE CRITICAL OF JEWS USUALLY REFER TO "ZIONISTY." WE HAVE RECENTLY HEARD THAT ONE OF THE SENIOR EDITORS OF VECHERNYAYA MOSKVA, HIMSELF A JEW, HAS BEEN TOLD TO PREPARE A SERIES OF ARTICLES FOR HIS PAPER IN WHICH JEWISH ACTIVITIES IN MANY BRANCHES OF SOVIET LIFE ARE TO RECEIVE FAVORABLE TREATMENT. THE GINZBURG ARTICLE MAY THEREFORE BE THE FIRST OF THE SERIES.
MATLOCK

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